

humanitarianism (je crois que plus tard on
reconnaitra
que l'amour de l'humanit^e est
quelquechose d'aussi pie^tre
que l'amour de Dieu'). He loathed all that
they pro-
duced; their newspapers came to cause him
a physical
disgust; and from the conversations of
their drawing-

- rooms he would emerge giddy and
staggering as if he had
been bludgeoned about the head. As a
supreme type of
bourgeois mentality, he is fascinated by
the exploit at
Alexandria of a countryman of ours, one
Thompson of
Sunderland, who had inscribed his name
in letters six feet
high, visible a quarter of a league away,
on the base of
Pompey's Pillar. 'Ce cretin' seems to him
the very symbol
of the sort of imbeciles, bestially robust,
who spring up
with an obscene grin in the midst of
life's loveliest
moments.

Feeling himself a voice thus lost in a
wilderness of apes,
he invented for himself a patron saint, and
for the apes a
god. The saint was St. Polycarp, of whom
he had found
an old portrait with the legend: *Mon Dieu,
mon Dieu,

vdans quel age m'avez-vous fait naitre!' The
god was an
earlier conception, prior to Flaubert's
eighteenth year; he
figured in a vision, a sort of *Faust*, already
then long-
planned'; there, it is not the man, Smar, nor
his tempter,
Satan, that triumphs finally, but 'Yuk, le dieu
du gro-
tesque'. Often, thenceforth, it seems to the
reader of
Flaubert as if Yuk were the one true God,
and Flaubert
his prophet. It was Yuk who brooded
grinning over the

birth of Monsieur Homais and the deathbed
of Emma
Bovary; who inspired the too cynical last
sentence of
L'Education Sentimentale; who guided like a
will-o'-the-
wisp the staggerings after knowledge of
Bouvard and
P&uchet; whose spirit, in a gender mood, is
symbolised
by the stuffed parrot that the old servant in
Un Coeur
Simple conceives in her dotage to be the
Holy Ghost.